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STATE FOR IIP/G/WHA INR/R/MR, WHA/BSC, WHA/PDA, INR/IAA

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [PHUM](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [CI](#)
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION - PRESS FREEDOM

11. On February 7, center-left "Diario Siete" (circ. 23,000) carried an editorial entitled "Muslims and Caricatures." Quote:

"The violence unleashed by the caricatures of Mohamed... reflect much more than a confrontation between freedom (of expression) in the West and alleged Muslim barbarians.... It shows that not even the smallest effort has been made to understand the degree of dissatisfaction in that part of the world.... The visceral rage of the Muslim population must make the West realize that it has never taken that rich and complex culture into account."

12. On February 6, conservative, afternoon "La Segunda" (circ. 31,834) carried an editorial entitled "Renewed Muslim Activism."

"There is no doubt that this conflict shows an enormous and mutual lack of understanding between the majority of those who identify themselves with either of the two cultures, which must be resolved. While the West upholds freedom of expression, even that which ridicules, the followers of Mohamed view this as an attack on what they consider most sacred. Perhaps the only truly balanced view in this matter has been that of the Vatican, which has drawn a line between legitimate criticism...and the clear intention to disrespect symbols and values of a people or culture...an offense that would probably not be tolerated if it affected other groups which are politically incorrect to harass."

KELLY